AERFP Questions & Answers

Q1.)Could you clarify whether or not the following priority considerations apply to each individual investment request? (i.e. Investment 2.1 Family Literacy should ideally serve a minimum of 50 people, 4 hours a week, 30 weeks.)
A1) To ensure adequate resources to deliver outcomes and efficiency, it is our priority to make grants that will allow all eligible providers to be successful. While all funding requests from eligible providers will be considered, priority consideration will be given to proposals that target at least 50 participants per year, where each participant will be offered a minimum of 120 hours of instruction per year. Put differently, if an agency proposes a program in response to a specific investment area and that proposed program has capacity to serve less than 50 persons, then the proposed program will be considered and reviewed but the applicant should be aware that priority consideration will be given to programs that have capacity to serve at least 50 persons.

Q2.) If a program is running or wants to run both a classroom-based component taught by paid staff and a volunteer 1-on-1 tutoring component, how does this program apply?
A2) The program should submit a program design that they feel will enable them to reach the outcomes measures listed in the Call for Investment Proposals. Expanded learning options or designs built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice aimed at persistence and completion are encouraged. If a classroom-based program taught by highly qualified professional staff wishes to also operate a volunteer tutoring component or engage in a partnership with a one-on-one volunteer tutoring program, then it is eligible to apply for funding for this volunteer component or have its volunteer tutoring partner do so, as long as this component is consistent with the requirements stated in the Call for Investment Proposals.

Q3.) When we prepare our monthly cash reimbursement requests and the final fiscal reports, we use our accounting system to run the reports. The system has been set up to use the same categories as our budgets and RIDE fiscal reports (100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, etc.). The budget pages for this RFP have the following categories: salary, fringe consultant and other expenses. Will the 2007-20010 RIDE fiscal reports correspond to the categories on the new budget forms?
Q4) Yes

Q4.) Can you make available a list of all the Adult Ed agencies attending the RIC conference?
A4.) Yes, these will be made available.

Q5.) Do you have more information available about the Providence census tracts that currently have adult ed services located in them? Or, conversely, which Providence census tracts do not have Adult Ed services available?

A6.) The Providence Plan website (http://www.provplan.org/matriarch/default.asp) provides a variety of information on Providence neighborhoods and census data. All current RIDE funded Adult Education providers are listed on the RIDE website.

Q6.) What are the Puma regions? What is their relevance to writing a proposal? For example, should proposals address an Investment Priority or an Agency Target across a region, or can they focus in on one City or school district without any loss of "consideration"?
A6.) Sub state areas identified in U.S. Census are known as "Public Use Microdata Areas" (PUMAs) and may be large single counties or groups of counties. The population threshold is identified as 100,000 people, but may vary according to the complexity of the data shown.

Services by PUMA region is not a requirement of the Call for Investment Proposal. You can focus on one city or school district. You may offer services in one or more regions.

Q7.) Is Investment Priority Area 1.1 funds restricted to supporting and/or supplementing youth programs provided through the local WIB's? Or, if not so restricted, are the funds restricted to an agency working with an agency to support and/or supplement its youth program? Does "consideration of proposals" mean an agency will receive priority or "extra-points" when applying for these funds? If so, can you describe the advantage an agency may or will receive when applying for these funds?
A7.) Funds are not restricted to programs provided through the local WIB, however the program must be an eligible program as defined on page 18. While no bonus points will be given in the Call for Investment Proposals, special consideration will be given to youth service providers that have submitted a youth proposal to the local WIBs.

Q8.) Is Investment Priority Area 1.2 replacing the current Project Opportunity grants?
A8.) Priority Area 1.2 addresses pathways to jobs for current and former welfare recipients. The old "project Opportunity" initiative and associated grant awards have been revised based on practitioner input, agency input, and effectiveness research. This investment area reflects these revisions/improvements to Project Opportunity.

Q9.) Is Investment Priority Area 1.3 the "Trade Adjustment Assistance Act" dollars? Or are the TAAA dollars only a portion of that funding?
A9.) A portion of priority Area 1.3 will be funded with Trade Adjustment Assistance Act funds.

Q10.) When addressing targets for "Selected Funding Streams" as defined in Attachment D, where should Fund Use requirements be addressed? Should statements related to the requirements be included in the milestones for the specific clients?
A10.) Statements related to requirements generally should not be milestones. Specific program design requirements associated with these funding streams can be documented in Section B, Part 4, Services/Approach.

Q11) If a program targets adults eligible for "Trade Adjustment Assistance Act" dollars, can the proposal be for specific regions or is the expectation that one agency will provide services statewide? Should the proposal include agreements with the Dept of Labor and Training and specific one-stops, or will the Depts. of Education and Labor and Training provide access to clients and space to the agency(s) who receive the funding?
A11.) The Call for Investment Proposals was designed to be flexible and proposals should focus on the population and outcomes relative to the need. The Office of Adult Education encourages appropriate collaboration. However, it is the responsibility of the applicant to secure and document these collaborations.

Q12) At the mandatory bidders' conference, Dr. Uvin mentioned that Elliot from The Rensselaerville Institute would be helping agencies move to outcomes-based educational programs. Is he available before the proposals are submitted? Might a workshop date be set up to review key items, or to comment on work in progress?
A12.) Training and technical assistance oporutnies will be provided in the late spring. These sessions will be post submission.

Q13) When developing budgets for Year 2 and Year 3, should agencies consider only the work in the first year and add reasonable cost increases expected through inflation, contract agreements, &c? Or should agencies consider how the program will grow from the success of the first year, and add funds to serve additional learners, additional sites, &c? If the latter, should a cost per learner guideline be used to support the increases?
A13) Budgets should be consistent over the three years and support the program objectives outlined in the proposal.

Q14.) The question is about the basic requirement of 50 people in a program. Is this per individual investment area? We would like to apply for the Family Literacy or Employment investor categories but we would not have 50 people in these investment areas. For example, we could serve about 25 refugees (a special population) with a Family literacy program. With our regular Adult Education investment area, we will be serving well over the 50 minimum requirement. So we did not know if the 50 person minimum requirement related to each and every separate investment area. We need to know this to construct our estimated budget for the letter of intent.
A14.) See above.

Q15.) Could you confirm that Citizenship Classes now fall under the 3.1 El Civics investment as these were two separate grants in the past.
A15.) The statewide annual target for the priority area of engaged citizens (3.1) includes an outcome of citizenship.

Q16) I want to make sure I understand the funding mechanism. For instance, if the total cost to conduct the activities of a proposal equals $100,000is this considered the design cost?
If yes, then am I following correctly that the $100,000 gets added to the $40,000 base which yields $140,000? If yes again, then finally am I following correctly that the maximum request would be 90% of the $140,000or $126,000?
A16) Yes.

Q17.) If a consortium of agencies were to submit a proposal, is there only one $40,000 base amount allowable, or would each agency in the consortia be eligible for the base amount even though there would only be one proposal submitted?
A17.) There is only one $40,000 base amount per proposal.

Q18.) We do not offer ABE. We do get students in the ABE level that pre-test with us. Do we have to refer our students to a partner agency, or can we give them a list of state agencies that offer ABE classes?
A18.) We are interested in providing pathways for continued learning. You may address this in the manner that best suits your agency.

Q19.) We offer Improvement classes for students applying to vocational training classes at Community College of Rhode Island. Students that take a pre-test for vocational training classes must have a certain score for each program. Any student, who does not meet the favorable score, is referred to the GED office for the Improvement class which lasts 6 weeks. Last year, 87% of students that were enrolled in Improvement classes advanced 1-2 (sometimes 3) Educational Functioning levels. If we apply for investment proposal 1.4, can we include this class in our plan?
A19.) Yes, as long as the student is likely to attain the GED in the given year.

Q20.) On page 17 under "data-driven planning" - can an example of data-driven design be provided?
A20.) Strategic, long range and other forms of program planning all rely upon effective use of data. The applicant has responsibility and discretion to describe how it uses data for planning purposes.

Q21.) Pg 20 - last sentence. If an agency serves a small number of FIP recipients are they supposed to be separated out from other clients or can they simply be absorbed into ABE/GED or whatever programs as they have been in the past?
A21.) All FIP clients must adhere to the requirements and considerations listed on page 98 in the Call for Investment Proposals.

Q22.) Pg 23 - Section 1.3 Middle - Statewide Annual Target - last paragraph on the page - The target deals with individuals who set a "job retention" goal. In our use this has always dealt with

clients who enter our program already employed. So if they are already employed please clarify the wording of this target which says "entered employment within one quarter after exiting" etc.... If they are already employed there will be no need to "enter employment" after exiting the program.
A22.) Target 1 deals with **unemployed** adults and Target 2 deals with **underemployed** adults.

Q23.) Question about funds for job placement/acquisition, job development, post-secondary placement, and retention in employment. NRS and the State require grantees to have goals related to the above items. Will funds be made available for staff to work on job development, post-secondary retention, etc?
A23.) All proposals should budget necessary resources to accomplish the proposed design.

Q24.) If two agencies that are part of a regional network have different strengths, specifically basic adult education in one and job development/placement in another, and one agrees to do the education for both and one agrees to do the job placement for both, how will targets be measured? Should each individual agency request funding for both services or only the one they will perform? In essence, the question has to do with accountability. Who will be responsible for meeting targets?
A24.) If one proposal is submitted that includes outcomes related to multiple agencies, the multiple programs as an entity as well as individually will be accountable for the outcomes.

Q25.) How should we account for clients that enroll in one activity which has been assigned to a particular investor priority area and then choose to switch to another or participate in a second investor priority area?
A25.) Individual investment areas allow for duplication, however the proposal must provide an unduplicated count in the total line on page 42 of the Call for Investment Proposals.

Q26.) To what extent can funds be requested to support child care and transportation for clients?
A26.) Child Care/Other is categorized on page 90 under allowable costs and general guidelines for allocating budget line items. The extent should be based upon the program design.

Q27.) Pg 30 - Measurable participant goals and outcomes. The stipulations in this section appear to place requirements on clients to have specific goals. For instance, "at least 40% of those unemployed must have an entered employment goal" and there are several more like this including "All those with skills at the high ASE level must have a high school credential goal" and the 80% welfare requirement for gaining employment. If the clients have goals other than the parameters listed in this section, or our experience indicates that clients are not likely to meet these criteria how should we address this issue in the proposal and/or in practice?   For instance, what if the ASE learner already has a diploma and is back trying to improve skills for job enhancement or for post-secondary admittance? Or if a client on assistance is already employed?

A27.) Proposed performance targets in the Call For Investment Proposals are aggregate outcomes that should account for students entering the program at different levels of goals achievement. The minimum "stipulations" are nonnegotiable (e.g., at least 40% of the unemployed must have an entered employment goal).

Q28.) Pg 42 - Cover Sheet -Does "Target Population" refer to the estimated amount of clients in our region or is it a demographic or descriptive item? In other words, does a number go in this box?

A28.) Investment Area refers to Investment Priority Area such as 1.4 Pathways to High School Credentials and Post Secondary Education. Target population refers to a description of the population to be targeted for this investment. The number will go in the box titled # to be served.

Q29.) Listing of Site(s) - is this a definitive list or will there be flexibility to change sites as the circumstances dictate? And is a site the physical location of an activity or does it refer to the local zip code areas that may be served by a "site" in an adjacent community?
A29.) The proposal should include planned sites where services will be delivered.

Q30.) # to be served on page 42, please verify this is for only those clients who attend for 12 or more hours.
A30.) The chart on page 42 should include all perspective students.